

# The True North Star.

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## REMINISCENCES OF 1812.

An Eye-Witness Account of the War on the Border and Surrender of Detroit.

The Maumee Valley Pioneer Association met at Perrysburg, Ohio, recently, and a number of addresses were made and papers read by old settlers. Among the number was a paper by Gen. John E. Hunt, extracts from which we give herewith:

Judge Thomas Dunlap then read the following recollections of the olden time, entitled "Sixty Years Since," embracing mainly reminiscences from Gen. John E. Hunt's experience.

On the march from Miami to Monroe, when about half way, news reached us of the declaration of war.

The British got the news before we did, through a fur company's agent, who took it by express direct to Canada. The Canadians might have taken Detroit by surprise before Hull got there. Hull stopped two days at Monroe to make a display of his troops.

Thence we marched up the River Huron; there we camped in an open prairie. We could see from our camp the masts of the brig 20-gun ship, Queen Charlotte, which lay in the lake off Malden. Some Indians were observed at a distance. During the night we were aroused by a false alarm. Hull's apprehension of an attack by a force which might be landed from the Queen Charlotte gave color to the alarm. It was afterward learned that the Indians were Wyandots, who offered themselves to us as allies at Detroit. Their services were not accepted, as our government's orders to Hull were to have nothing to do with them.

At that time there were no British troops on board the Queen Charlotte. On the occasion of this false alarm it was whispered in camp that the old man Hull was a good deal frightened. The next day we went into camp at the River Rouge, seven miles from Detroit. We marched in great disorder, strung along five or six miles. Hull halted there eight or ten days to prepare his men to make a display through the streets of Detroit. Detroit was then a town of from ten to twelve hundred people. Then he marched his men through Detroit and back again to camp on the River Rouge. After some days he moved up and crossed the Detroit River in batteaux Lelew Belle Isle. One beautiful morning they sailed without opposition and made a fine display, marching down opposite Detroit with colors flying and music playing. There they made a fortified camp and remained. A two-story brick house in the center of the camp was the General's headquarters. There I first saw Gen. Cass, then a Colonel.

It was a warm July morning, and I was taking my breakfast at a boarding house kept by a man whose name was Deputy. At the table sat Maj. Munson, of Zanesville, Ohio. A red-faced young man with a morning gown on, came in, and, as he took a seat alongside of Maj. Munson he said something severe against Gen. Hull. Maj. Munson said: "Col. Cass, what is the matter with you?"

Cass replied he had been two hours with that old fool and could not get him to make a push on Malden, all he could do. "He has agreed to let me go down with my regiment and two companies of the Fourth United States Infantry, and if God lets me live I'll have Malden before I get back."

The British had a two-gun battery at the River Canard, four miles above Malden, so posted as to take the canalway and bridge at that point. A day or two before a regiment of our militia had been driven back from there. Cass sent two companies of the United States Fourth Infantry, under Capt. Snelling, to ford the stream above the battery. When Snelling made his appearance approaching the British on their flank, Cass moved forward with his main force upon the bridge. The enemy opened fire upon him, but when they discovered Snelling on their flank they retreated. Cass followed them to within a mile and a half of Malden, when it became so dark he thought it prudent to go back to the battery at the bridge. From thence he sent an express to Hull for reinforcements, so as to attack Malden the next morning. Instead of doing so, Hull sent his aid to Col. Wallace, of Cincinnati, and ordered Cass back.

Cass had frequently told me that he has always regretted he did not disobey orders and march on Malden. He afterwards learned the British had all their valuables ready to leave, and loaded on board the Queen Charlotte. If he had made his appearance in the morning the British would have blown up their fort and sailed away to Niagara. This would have prevented an Indian war and saved Detroit. Cass returned to camp, and a few days after Hull, on hearing of the advance of Gen. Brock, retreated across the river to Detroit, where he occupied Fort Shelby. This fort was situated right about the center of the present city of Detroit, about the fourth street back from the river.

Gen. Brock, at Niagara, had overreached Gen. Dearborn, another superannuated revolutionary officer, who was then in command of that frontier, and had concluded with him an armistice of thirty days. This gave time for the Queen of Charlotte to sail from Malden to the lower end of Lake Erie, and return with himself and force, which captured Detroit. Soon after Hull crossed back, Brock moved the Queen Charlotte up the river and anchored off Sandwich, covering with her guns the crossing to Detroit. While the ship was stationed there, Capt. Snelling asked Gen. Hull, in my presence, liberty to take two twelve-pound guns down to Springwells and sink her or start her from her position.

Full said, "No, sir; you can't do it." Brock had built a battery on the Canada side, opposite Fort Shelby. As soon as it was finished, when the sun was about an hour high, he opened fire on us. During the night shells were thrown at intervals. At the dawn of day a heavy fire of bombs and solid shot was opened. I was taking a drink of water at the door of one of the officer's quarters, in company with a boy of my age, who afterward became Maj. Washington Whistler, United States army, and died in Russia of cholera many years after. At the next door to us, and about twelve feet from us, four of our officers were standing together. They were Capt. Hanks, Lieut. Sibley, Dr. Blood, and Dr. Reynolds, of Columbus. A thirty-two pound shot came from the enemy's battery, killing Hanks, Sibley, and Reynolds, and wounding Dr. Blood. They were knocked into a heap into a little narrow entry way—a narrow, confined space. Their mangled remains were a terrible sight. Capt. Hanks was lying on top, his eyes rolling in his head. Directly came along Gen. Hull, who looked in upon them and turned very pale, the tobacco juice running from the corners of his mouth on to the frills of his shirt. In a short time after the white flag was hoisted, that ball seeming to unman him.

After these men were killed I left the fort to go to reconnoitre. On the street in front of Maj. Whipple's house, a quarter a mile in front of Fort Shelby, I found two 32-pound guns in position. Capt. Bryson, of the artillery, had placed them there to take the British column of 1,500 men, who had made a landing and were approaching the city by way of Judge May's long lane. They had landed at Springwells and were marching up the lane to reach a ravine which crossed it and through which they could file and be protected from any battery we had.

They were marching in close column, in full dress uniform of scarlet, in perfect order, at a steady, regular pace, without music. As they came on, followed by their Indian allies and some twenty whites dressed as Indians, my boyish fancy was struck with their appearance, as I expected every moment to see them torn to pieces by those thirty-two pounders double charged with canister and grape.

My brother Thomas stood ready at the guns. In his hand a lighted match was held up in the air. He was in the very act of firing, when Col. Cass, the aid of Gen. Hull, came up and said, "Don't fire, the white flag is up." And that instant Capt. Hull, who had been across the river with a flag of truce, fell in with us on his return. Col. Wallace said to him, "It's all up, your father has surrendered." Capt. Hull exclaimed, "My God, is it possible?"

Capt. Hull afterward showed great bravery on the Niagara frontier, where he was killed.

During the British occupation of Detroit the following incident occurred between the British officers and myself, at the house of Mr. McIntosh, in Sandwich. McIntosh was the agent of the N. W. Fur Company in Canada, and by brother had married a sister of his. I had been in the habit of going over to spend Sunday and going to church in Sandwich.

The church there was the only Protestant church in that part of the land at that time. There were also some nice young ladies there, the daughters of Mr. McIntosh. On the Sunday after the surrender I went over with my brother. To my surprise I found Gen. Brock with his staff officers dining with McIntosh.

The host called on all the officers present for toasts, beginning with Gen. Brock. Toward tea time the old gentleman called on me, putting his hand on my shoulder, saying in his broad Scotch: "Come, my lad, give us a toast." I had become much attached to Capt. Hull, son of the General. On the trip to Detroit he had shown me much attention on account of my family connections. So I showed my chair back, stood up, and gave them "Capt. Hull." Whereupon Brock slapped his hand on the table, saying, "By George, that's a good one."

"Well, gentlemen, we will drink to a brave man if he is an enemy." He had heard the day before of Capt. Hull in the frigate United States taking the British frigate Guerriere. The joke was I meant Capt. Hull of the army. They drank the toast to Capt. Hull of the navy. I did not disguise their minds because I thought the taking of the Guerriere pretty good offset to our surrender at Detroit.

McIntosh clapped me on the shoulder and said, "That's right, my boy, always stick to your country."

Col. Cass, with the officers taken at Detroit, went on board the Queen Charlotte as prisoners, sailed down the lake and were landed at Niagara. Gen. Brock being aboard the same vessel, Cass asked him how he could have thought of such a thing as coming up to take Detroit with the small force he had.

"Why, sir," said he, "I knew there was something the matter with your army. I could not tell whether the fault was in the army or in the general. It was a forlorn hope with me; unless I could conclude an armistice with Dearborn, bring my whole force to Detroit, and succeed in taking it, I knew we should lose upper Canada."

During the succeeding winter I lived at Sandwich and went to school. Proctor's headquarters were there.

## THE DIAMOND MAN.

Such a sight may never be seen in Detroit again—twelve diamond pins artistically arranged on a piece of white card-

board—twelve glittering, glistening, sparkling, resplendent diamonds, not one of which would have looked out of place on the shirt-front of Duke Alexis.

The diamond merchant was not a young man; neither was he old and broken down. He was just about old enough to sell diamonds, and just about seedy enough to make folks believe he would discount a thousand dollars on each precious stone for the sake of obtaining cash down. He first tackled the special police man at the Central depot. He held up the card, flashing the twelve diamonds in the officer's eyes, and sweetly said:

"You are a noble-looking man. I've visited the principal cities of Europe and Africa, and I never saw a more noble-looking officer than you are. There is only one thing lacking—you should have one of those diamonds."

"Can't afford it," said the officer, feeling to see if the lone \$2 bill in his watch-pocket was safe.

"These diamonds are being sold by all first-class jewelers at \$500 each," whispered the man; "but I tell you what I'll do. I took 'em on a chattel mortgage, and I'll let you have one for \$25."

"Snide," replied the officer, as he examined them.

"Snide! Dear me! but I thought you were a keen, sharp fellow. Go with me to a jeweler, and if he denies that these are diamonds of the first water I'll give you the whole twelve."

The officer couldn't buy. The man came down five dollars, and at last dropped to two, but it was Saturday, and a policeman loves chicken for his Sunday dinner. There was a great many hackmen around the depot. The stranger went out among them, selected one whose make-up betokened good taste, and drawing him away from the rest he asked:

"You wouldn't go back on a poor man, would you?"

"Never," was the earnest reply.

"Here's some diamonds I stole in Paris," whispered the stranger as he pulled out the card. "I'm hard up, and will sell one or two."

The hackman gazed on the jewels for half a minute, handed them back, and began to unbuckle his overcoat.

"You have had a good bringing up," whispered the stranger, "and you can wear one of these diamonds and be consistent. There are men in De—"

"I'll hurt you if you don't go away!" growled the hackman.

"As I said, I stole these diamonds in Paris, and I've got to part with one or two to pay current expenses," continued the peddler.

"You keep right away, or I'll make a sand-bar of your nose," replied the hackman. When I want a dollar diamond I'll whistle one out of basswood!"

"A dollar diamond! Basswood! Whistle! Is there no taste in Detroit!"

The hackman rushed at the peddler, and the peddler had to leave the neighborhood of the depot. He went over to where a city expressman sat on his sleigh, waiting for a job, and such a soft, tender, pie-plantish smile as he smiled would almost make cabbage plants sprout in January.

"It isn't very often that one sees a man of your stylish look driving an express wagon," remarked the stranger.

"Take your trunk up, sir!" asked the driver; "any part of the city for fifty cents."

"Your looks go to show that you once moved in high circles," continued the stranger, and I have no doubt that you once wore one of these."

"Ah! those are beauties," said the driver, as he saw the card of diamonds.

"Guess they are beauties. One of them on your shirt front would look well."

"It would, that."

"And, owing to the way I got hold o 'em, I can sell you one cheap. I found 'em on the street in New York city, where a thief dropped 'em, and I'm hard up, and will sell you one almost at your own price."

"And I must have one," replied the driver. "Do you warrant 'em real diamonds?"

"Of course I do."

"And the pin is gold?"

"Pure gold, sir."

"And you want how much?"

"Well," whispered the stranger, as he looked all around, "if you won't blow me I'll let you have one for seven dollars."

"Seven dollars," yelled the driver, "do you think I can find food for a horse and nine children, and pay rent, and buy clothes, and spend seven dollars for a diamond? Why, I can buy diamonds for two shillings!"

"Oh, no you can't. If I wasn't hard up I wouldn't sell one of these for less than \$500."

"Haven't I driven an express wagon in Detroit for fourteen years? Don't I know the price of diamonds? Wasn't I in the army for three long years? I'll give you twenty cents and no more."

"I couldn't do that."

"Then leave me alone, you swindler you! I believe you came here to steal my horse-blanket!"

The two had a fight. It was a one-sided fight. The stranger had his head jammed into the snow and his breath shut off, and when he got up his twelve diamonds were missing. Although valued at \$5,000, he did not stop to look for them, but with thumb and finger down behind his coat-collar to pull out the snow, he made haste to be somewhere else. The driver borrowed a pin to take the place of a shirt button, and feelingly remarked:

"When they run diamonds up above twenty-five cents, they touch a tender chord in every poor man's heart."—Detroit Free Press.

## A LUCKY LOCKSMITH.

From Abject Poverty to a Coronet and a Vast Fortune in the Tyrol—A Father's Death-bed Repentance.

The New York Mercury prints the following story:

One year ago Jacob Heydebrand was a poor locksmith at No. 116 Hester street. One day, while on a Fulton-ferry boat, he met an acquaintance, who asked him if he was the Jacob Heydebrand whom the Austrian Consulate was advertising for. His friend had some difficulty in persuading him to go to the Consulate, and ascertain whether or not he was the person wanted. At the Consulate he was asked if he had been in 1850 at Bockenheim, near Frankfurt-on-the-Main. He replied in the affirmative.

"Did you board there with a family named Schoen, and did you meet at their house an Austrian officer?" Heydebrand replied again in the affirmative.

"What was the name of that officer?" "It was Count Jacob Von Heydebrand. He was captain in the Ninth Regiment of Austrian Hussars," he answered. "Well, then you are the man we want." So saying the Consul handed the astonished locksmith a bundle of documents, which he said he had better have examined by some German lawyer, and he also informed him that he was instructed to pay him the sum of \$2,000. The German lawyer to whom Heydebrand gave the papers was greatly surprised at their contents, which were to the following effect: Count Aloysius Von Heydebrand, a wealthy nobleman, had died in 1872, having confessed on his death-bed that the Austrian officer, Colonel Jacob Von Heydebrand, who had hitherto passed as his only son, was only an illegitimate child, his real son and heir, who had borne the same name, having been set adrift in the world after his mother had died, by his mistress, Bernhilde Hoelzel, who had borne him a son about the same time. That wicked woman had possessed such a power over him that she had wrung from him the consent to substitute her son in the place of little Jacob, whom she had taken to her relations in Darmstadt. The old count implored his illegitimate son, the Austrian colonel, to leave nothing undone in order to make amends for the great injustice that had been done to his legitimate heir, and to restore to him, if he should be able to ascertain his whereabouts, his paternal estate. It was then that the colonel remembered having met at Bockenheim, twenty-two years before, a young locksmith, whose acquaintance he had sought because the latter had borne the same name. So he applied to the Schoen family, who were still living at Bockenheim, and from them he obtained the information that the young locksmith had left that place many years ago for America. The colonel thereupon applied to the Austrian legation in Washington, and Jacob Heydebrand was extensively advertised for, until found in New York. Among the papers was an autograph from his illegitimate brother, the colonel, offering to restore his paternal estates to him, and expressing regrets at the injustice that had been done to him for so many years. Meanwhile Heydebrand had married a poor German servant-girl, who had borne to him several children. The wife was overjoyed upon learning the unexpected change in her husband's fortune, and she prevailed upon him to go with her immediately to Innsbruck to enter upon the enjoyment of his new position. At Innsbruck his right as the sole heir of Count Heydebrand was formally recognized, and the poor Hester-street locksmith is now one of the wealthiest magnates of the Austrian Empire. His wife, the former servant-girl, was ennobled by a special decree of the Emperor.

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